

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC

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E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: APRIL 10 INDOCHINA PRESS SUMMARY

1. REUTER (NYT) REPORTS THREE MORE SUPPLY VESSELS REACH
PP, AND OPENING OF ROUTE 4 LEADING TO KOMPONG SOM. PP
GASOLINE RATIONED AND RICE PURCHASES RESTRICTED TO 12 OZ.
PER DAY. US AIR SUPPORT INSTRUMENTAL IN GETTING SHIPS
THROUGH COMMUNIST MEKONG AMBUSHES. JAPANESE EMASSY
DEPENDENTS BEING EVACUATED TO BANGKOK. POST' S GREENWAY
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REPORTS US EMBASSY OFFICIALS SAY THEY BEEN AUTHORIZED
START PETROLEUM AIRLIFT. SKIPPER OF SHIP GETTING THROUGH

SAYS GVN PROMISED FIVE GUNBOATS BUT NONE SHOWED UP.
ALSO SAYS US TACAIR DOESN'T HAVE LASTING EFFECT AND
AFTER PLANES COMPLETE MISSION, COMMUNIST GUNNERS OPEN
UP AGAIN (WP).

2. REUTER HK REPORTS SIHANOUK SAYS HE VISITED ANGKOR
AND ATTENDED RALLY OF 10,000 PERSONS DURING CLANDESTINE
VISIT; HE SAYS VISIT SHOWS HE HAS BACKING OF KHMER;
DESCRIBES BOMBING AS " VERITABLE UNDERTAKING OF GENOCIDE."
CSM' S SCHMIDT REPORTS US HELPLESS AS COMMUNISTS SEEM
TO BE TAKING OVER CAMBODIA. AIRLIFT, ACCORDING
ONE HIGH OFFICIAL, " IS NO SOLUTION BUT THERE SEEMS
NO OTHER DIRECTION TO WHICH WE CAN TURN." US URGING
LON NOL GALVANIZE GKR AND POPULATION BY BROADENING
GKR BASE. DESPITE MASSIVE US ARMS AID, FANK MORALE POOR
DUE CORRUPTION WHILE INSURGENTS ON RISE.

3. SEN. CHURCH IN CHITRIB INTERVIEW SAYS US CAMBODIA
BOMBING " UTTERLY ILLEGAL." HE TOTALLY OPPOSES NVN
AID, SAYING IT CAN ONLY BE REGARDED AS REPARATIONS
OR RANSOM, AND " NEITHER FITS WITHIN MY CONCEPT OF PEACE
WITH HONOR." ACCORDING CHURCH, IT NOT US RESPONSIBILITY
TO ENFORCE VN AGREEMENT BY MILITARY MEANS.

4. NYT' S FOX IN SAIGON REPORTS CANADA' S GEN. MACALPINE
REJECTS VC ASSERTION ICCS CHOPPERS WERE SHOT DOWN
BECAUSE THEY HAD STRAYED OFF COURSE. WH SPOKESMAN
SAYS PRESIDENT VIEWS INCIDENTS AS " EXTREMELY SERIOUS."
AP OTTAWA REPORTS SHARP SAYS CANADA WILL WITHDRAW FROM
ICCS UNLESS OPERATING CONDITIONS " IMPROVE VERY SUBSTANTIAL
LY." SAIGON SOURCES TELL FOX THAT VC, WHO REFER TO
SHOOT- DOWNS AS " AN ACCIDENT," TRIED TO GET ICCS OFFICERS
DETAILED TO PICK UP BODIES TO SIGN PAPERS ABSOLVING
VC OF BLAME- BUT THEY REFUSED. VC SAIGON STATEMENT
REFERS TO " REGRETTABLE ACCIDENT," EXPRESSES " SINCERE
CONDOLENCES" TO HUNGARIAN, CANADIAN AND INDONESIAN
ICCS DELS, AND PROMISES TO WORK OUT MEASURES WITH GVN
TO PREVENT RECURRENCE. SHARP SAYS " NO CIRCUMSTANCES
SHOULD EVER JUSTIFY FIRING ON THE PLANE."

5. WP REPORTS MACALPINE SAYS CHOPPER SHOT DOWN BY
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HEAT- SEEKING MISSILE. ICCS SUSPENDS CHOPPER FLIGHTS.
SHARP ACCUSES VC OF HINDERING SEARCH FOR DOWNED CHOPPERS
AND REVEALS VC TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO GET ICCS SIGN
STATEMENT AGREEING CHOPPER WAS OFF COURSE. VC DENIES
MISSILE USED AND ALSO DENIES THEIR FORCES FIRED MONDAY
ON THIRD CHOPPER OVER DELTA. GAUVIN SAYS CANADA HAD
AGREED EXTEND ITS ICCS ROLE FOR 60 MORE DAYS, BUT
" WITH GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE USEFULNESS OF OUR PRESENCE,"
GIVEN " RATHER DISMAL RECORD OF THE ICCS SO FAR."

6. HAIG CONFERS WITH THAI AND LAO OFFICIALS AND GOES TO NAKOM PHANOM BASE (WP). THUY IN MOSCOW EN ROUTE TO HANOI. FRANCE HOLDING PARALLEL TALKS WITH DRV AND GVN TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS. TALKS WITH GVN DESIGNED REESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS SEVERED IN 1965 - THOSE WITH HANOI TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. NETHERLANDS ANNOUNCES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH DRV AND INTENTION TO EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS (WP).

7. SUN' S CORDDRY REPORTS WASHINGTON INTELLIGENCE SOURCES REVEAL NVA HAS BUILT UP MILITARY SUPPLIES IN SVN TO UNPRECEDENTED LEVELS. AIR DEFENSE BUILDUP ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT, INCLUDING SIX SAMS NEAR KHE SANH AND OVER 1100 AA GUNS IN FIVE NORTHERN PROVINCES. HANOI INTENTIONS UNDER INTENSE ANALYSIS AS

INFILTRATION CONTINUES AND ESTIMATED 1000 TONS OF ARTILLERY, ROCKET AND MORTAR SHELLS MOVE ACROSS BORDER INTO SVN. MANY AS 550 TANKS AND ARMORED VEHICLES NOW IN SOUTH.

8. BROOKE IN SAIGON REGRETS DRV REFUSAL TO RECEIVE HIM, BUT SAYS IT WON' T AFFECT HIS SUPPORT OF AID TO NVN (NYDN).

9. NYT' S TELTSCH REPORTS WALDHEIM HAS TOLD PRG IT MAY NOT OPEN UN OFFICE, ACCORDING QUALIFIED UN SOURCES, ON GROUNDS PRG NOT MEMBER OF UN OR ANY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. GVN NOT A UN MEMBER BUT IT HAS UN OBSERVER AND IS MEMBER OF UN AGENCIES.

10. THIEU MEETS WITH POPE AND PRESIDENT LEONE AMIDST UNCLASSIFIED

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MASSIVE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS AND SOME MINOR PROTESTING. VATICAN RELEASES COMMUNIQUE DESIGNED APPEASE LIBERAL CATHOLICS DESCRIBING PONTIFF' S CONCERN WITH " HUMAN PROBLEM OF POLITICAL PRISONERS ON BOTH SIDES." ACCORDING COMMUNIQUE, THIEU " FURNISHED AMPLE AND DETAILED INFORMATION." AT PRESS CONFERENCE, THIEU SAYS CHARGES OF 200,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE " COMMUNIST PRO-PAGANDA," GVN JAIL CAN ONLY HOLD 40,000. GVN NOW ONLY HOLDS 5,081 COMMUNIST CRIMINALS" WHOSE TERRORIST ACTIVITIES HAD CAUSED DEATHS OF WOMEN, CHILDREN AND CIVILIANS. THIEU AGREED RELEASE THEM IF HANOI WOULD RELEASE 67,000 DETAINEES IT HOLDS (PHINQ, SUN).

11. AP RECALLS LEE KUAN YEW' S RECENT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB COMMENT THAT U. S. INTERVENTION IN VN BROKE HYPNOTIC

SPELL THAT LED SOME SEASIA COUNTRIES TO BELIEVE COMMUNISM IS IRRESISTIBLE WAVE OF HISTORY. LEE HELD THAT " THERE WAS NO VN VICTORY," BUT HANOI " WILL BE QUIET FOR A WHILE, UNLESS MASSIVE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID IS AGAIN PUMPED IN" BY RUSSIA AND CHINA. HE URGED U. S. RETAIN PRESENCE IN ASIA, CONTENDING THAT GREAT- POWER COMPETITION FOR INFLUENCE OVER THIRD COUNTRIES IS PART OF " GAME OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" (CSM).

12. STAR- NEW (APR. 9) SEES 88-3 SENATE VOTE REQUIRING SPECIFIC CONGRESSIONAL O. K. FOR NVN AID REFLECTING RESENTMENT TOWARD HANOI STEMMING FROM POW TORTURE STORIES, OPPOSITION TO ALL FOREIGN AID, DESIRE TO RESTORE CONGRESS' VOICE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CONTROL OF FEDERAL SPENDING PRIORITIES, FEELING GENERATED BY CAMBODIA BOMBING THAT WE ARE STILL FIGHTING IN INDOCHINA

AND VN C- F FAR FROM COMPLETE.

13. NYT SEES COMMUNIST ATTACK AGAINST ICCS HELICOPTERS AS DELIBERATE ATTEMPT SABOTAGE PEACEKEEPING EFFORT. UNLESS OBSERVERS' SAFETY CAN BE ASSURED, THEIR EFFORTS WILL HAVE TO BE ABANDONED. WOULD BE TRAGIC STEP, BUT ONE NEVER ENTIRELY UNFORESEEABLE IN WAKE OF AGREE- MENT THAT FAILED SETTLE UNDERLYING ISSUES OF VN CONFLICT. UNCLASSIFIED

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REALITY IS THAT THERE ARE VIETNAM ISSUES THAT MUST BE RESOLVED BY VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES. THIRD PARTIES CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO GO ON LAYING DOWN THEIR LIVES ON BEHALF OF PEACE WHERE THERE IS NO WILL TO PEACE.

14. CDN' S GREEN (APR. 6) SAYS INTELLIGENCE SOURCES ESTIMATE PRESENT INFILTRATION WILL BOOST NVN TROOP STRENGTH IN SVN TO 200,000-250,000 ALLOWING FOR 26,000 COMMUNIST POWS RETURNED SINCE TRUCE. ONLY TWICE - IN 1968 BEFORE TET AND IN 1972 BEFORE SPRING OFFENSIVE - HAS NVN PUT SO MUCH EFFORT INTO INFILTRATION. HOWEVER, SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CURRENT INFILTRATION AND PAST: FIRST, NVN IS SENDING THOUSANDS OF " SEASONED" POLITICAL ORGANIZERS AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS INCLUDING MANY FORMER SOUTHERNERS WHO WENT NORTH IN 1954, THUS INDICATING PLAN FOR POLITICAL STRUGGLE. US ANALYSTS BELIEVE FIGHTING WILL RESUME LATER THIS YEAR AFTER COMMUNISTS BECOME CONVINCED THEY CANNOT WIN SUCH STRUGGLE. SECOND, SINCE FEBRUARY 22 THERE HAS BEEN NO US BOMBING ALONG HO TRAIL, ALLOWING COMMUNISTS BE REASONABLY ASSURED THAT MOST OF WHAT THEY PUT IN PIPELINES WILL BE DELIVERED.

15. ROSS (PHINQ) CONSIDERS THIEU' S US VISIT DIPLOMATIC SUCCESS. HE OBTAINED PLEDGE OF " VIGOROUS" REACTION TO NVN C- F VIOLATIONS AND PROMISE OF " SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE." HE RECEIVED FRIENDLY RECEPTION ON CAPITOL HILL; ANTI- WAR DEMONSTRATORS NUMBERED FEWER THAN 300. EVIDENTLY SENSING COLLAPSE OF OPPOSITION, THIEU' S AIDES ACKNOWLEDGED - THOUGH NOT FOR QUOTATION - THAT HE WAS INTENT ON FRUSTRATING POLITICAL PROVISIONS OF PEACE AGREEMENT WHICH CALL FOR CREATION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL TO PREPARE NEW ELECTIONS. THIEU' S AIDES SAID THEY PLAN STALL NEGOTIATIONS FOR 12 MONTHS, CONFIDENT COMMUNISTS AND NEUTRALISTS COULD BE EXCLUDED FROM ANY SHARE OF POWER THEREAFTER. THIEU' S VISIT HAS SHOWN HIM TO BE MAN OF CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL PRESENCE, DIPLOMATIC CUNNING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS FLAIR.

16. CHITRIB' S KIRK (APR. 9) IN HK SAYS SIHANOUK

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WAITING ANXIOUSLY FOR MOMENT TO REESTABLISH HIS
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REGIME ON CAMBODIAN SOIL. THIS ASSESSMENT MADE BY WESTERN ANALYSTS AMID REPORTS THAT SIHANOUK MAY ALREADY HAVE APPEARED BRIEFLY IN " LIBERATED" NORTHEAST CAMBODIA. BEFORE VISIT TO HANOI IN EARLY FEBRUARY, SIHANOUK HAD INDICATED PROPENSITY FOR COMPROMISE WITH LON NOL REGIME. HOWEVER, REVERSED POSITION DURING TALKS WITH BOTH CAMBODIAN COMMUNIST INSURGENT LEADERS AND NVN OFFICIALS. CHINA- WATCHERS ATTRIBUTE SIHANOUK' S HARD LINE TO CONVICTION OF BOTH KHMER INSURGENTS AND VN COMMUNISTS OF IMMINENCE OF VICTORY. INTELLIGENCE SOURCES TEND VIEW SIHANOUK AS ONLY TITULAR LEADER OF DRIVE AGAINST LON NOL' S REGIME. REAL LEADERSHIP EMANATES FROM HANOI - AND POSSIBLY SOME CAMBODIAN INSURGENTS, NOTABLY KHIEU SAMPAN.

17. GLOBE' S CROCKER SNOW (APR. 9) IN TOKYO OBSERVES ONLY ONE BASIC CHANGE IN INDOCHINA - AMERICANS NO LONGER DIRECTLY INVOLVED MILITARILY IN EITHER VN, AND ALL KNOWN US POWS RELEASED. OTHERWISE, SITUATION OF CONTINUING CONFLICT OF ARMIES AND IDEOLOGIES PERSISTS, WITH CAMBODIA CURRENTLY MOST DRAMATIC BOILING POINT, WHERE BOMBING AND OTHER INGREDIENTS OF CURRENT CAMBODIAN SHOWDOWN HAVE MEANT THAT FAMILIAR FORCES OF CONFLICT AND CONFRONTATION STILL AT PLAY. ROGERS

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